

By ALAN E. STUBBS\*

After false starts and a stormy passage through Parliament, new legislation affecting a wide range of countryside issues has been passed.

An item of particular concern to entomologists is the list of protected species. At earlier steps in the evolution of the new legislation there was consultation with the Entomological Societies, and in particular through the Joint Committee for the Conservation of British Insects. However, the scope and nature of the draft legislation became greatly modified in its passage through Parliament. There are two major reasons for the changes in the list. Firstly, as an all embracing act there were no concessions to entomologists – thus, area listing and other conditions were swept aside to suit those interested in vertebrates. Secondly, it proved virtually impossible to influence events when neither of the Houses of Parliament has anyone with a knowledge of insects (the system depends on the right questions being asked).

There are now 19 species of invertebrates on the protected list. Discussion here will concentrate on the Lepidoptera since this will be the main concern of readers.

Large Blue (*Maculinea arion*). This was already protected under the Wild Creatures and Wild Plants Act 1975. In September 1979 the Nature Conservancy Council issued a press notice saying that the butterfly was probably extinct in Great Britain. No sighting accepted as authentic has been received since that date, despite checking out various reports.

Heath Fritillary (*Mellicta athalia*). With some reservations, the Societies had earlier accepted the inclusion of this species. It has been undergoing steady decline in the South-West where it is now down to two sites. There are real fears that it could die out in this area. However, in January 1982 the Duchy of Cornwall agreed to the removal of young conifers from its main site and NCC hopes to finance a study starting this summer. In Kent, the population level is erratic depending on the state of the coppice areas. Whilst numbers can be large in a good year, colonies could easily be collected out during population lows.

Chequered Skipper (*Carterocephalus palaemon*) was last seen in England in 1975 and was intended for protection in England only. With the various delays in the legislation it is now questionable whether it will be refound. However, the Act gives national listing though its status in Scotland is not critical.

Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*). This was sneaked on as a complete surprise, apparently because it is pretty and MP's have heard of it. NCC had 20 minutes to reply at a time when no-one with a knowledge of the insect was available. The advice that would have

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been given was that this butterfly, though local, is largely holding its own in Norfolk and is in no imminent danger. It is not the sort of species which would easily be collected out (the prospect of a Yare barrage is a far greater threat). Some people hold the view that now this species is on the Act, it should stay there as a flag waver for gaining public interest in insect conservation. (On a similar short notice occasion NCC successfully advised against the Purple Emperor being put on the Act.)

There are five moths on the Act. The Essex Emerald (*Thetidia smaragdaria* F.) was added to the 1975 Act in 1979 (see *Ent. Rec.*, 91: 258-60) since it was down to a very small colony; there are rumours of a second colony but its status remains critical. The Barberry Carpet. (*Pareulype berberata* D. & S.) has only one small native site, as has the New Forest Burnet (*Zygaena viciae* D & S.) and the Reddish Buff (*Acosmetia caliginosa* Hbn.). The Black-veined moth (*Siona lineata* Scopoli) has few localities.

The protected species among other invertebrates are one dragonfly (*Aeshna isosceles*), three Orthoptera (*Decticus verrucivorus*, *Gryllus campestris* and *Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa*), one leaf beetle (*Chrysolina cerealis*), two spiders (*Eresus niger* and *Dolomedes plantarius*) and three snails (*Monacha cartusiana*, *Myxas glutinosa* and *Catinella arenaria*).

All the above species are protected in England, Scotland and Wales, with provision for fines of up to £1000 per specimen taken or possessed illegally. It is illegal to disturb these species so netting a swallowtail to look at is against the law. Should anyone accidentally take a protected species, for instance a Reddish Buff moth in a light trap, then it should be released; if not recognised as such until dead and set, then it is best to inform NCC of the circumstances. Specimens obtained before 1982 are in the clear. It is however, illegal to trade or barter (or to advertise to do so) in these species or to receive specimens under these circumstances. It is possible to give away prior breeding stock or old specimens providing this is genuine-free rather than barter.

The Nature Conservancy Council does not wish to see long lists of species on this sort of Act anymore than entomologists do. Apart from the administrative implications, there is no point invoking the cumbersome arm of the law against collecting unless there is a real concern that collecting will endanger the survival of a species. In future it will be NCC who has prime responsibility for the listing on species. Such legislation emanating from Parliament is not directed at tripping up the responsible entomologist, it is there as a long stop against people who behave selfishly and irresponsibly towards endangered species.

Entomologists will share the view that conservation of habitats is the most important measure required. Here the Act has very substantially increased the safeguard for Sites of Special Scientific Interest, indeed NCC is now in a position to have a substantial say in how sites should be managed and, specifically, how they should not be managed. It is now imperative that the important entomological sites are given proper protection and that the most

damaging types of management are avoided. The Invertebrate Site Register organised by NCC is timely in these respects and it is hoped that entomologists will take full opportunity to see that their interests are taken into account.

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THE USE OF THE TERM 'POCK-MARK' IN ENTOMOLOGY. — Coleophorid leaf-mining larvae make a small entrance hole in the cuticle, the case being fixed at its orifice to the edge of the hole, so that the larva can fully extend itself to feed on the parenchyma without having entirely to quit the safety of its case. The larva then detaches its case and moves elsewhere, leaving behind a conspicuous blanched portion of leaf where it has fed and the tell-tale circular hole so familiar to microlepidopterists. In appearance, this hole resembles in miniature a pit or scar left by a pock, and so 'pock-mark' is suggested as a suitable term for this characteristic and well-known feature among the Coleophoridae. — J. M. CHALMERS-HUNT.

COLEOPHORA PARIPENNELLA ZELLER — A NEW FOODPLANT. — A single larval case of what appeared to be *Coleophora paripennella* was found on 9th June 1981 feeding on *Cirsium arvense* on a wide verge adjacent to the A 299 Thanet Way at Whitstable, Kent. The larva fed for about a week on *Cirsium* and the moth emerged on 14th. July 1981, which Dr. J. D. Bradley very kindly confirmed as *C. paripennella*. Other micro-lepidopterists are believed to have recorded this species from *Cirsium* but I can find no published reference. — N. F. HEAL, Fosters, Detling Hill, Nr. Maidstone, Kent.

CARPOPHILUS SEXPUSTULATUS (FABR.) (COL.: NITIDULIDAE) IN SURREY WITH A NOTE ON ITS HABITS IN BRITAIN. — Amongst beetles revealed by removing the loose bark of a large oak log on 17.iii.1981 in Richmond Park (TQ 1871) was a single example of this species. This would appear to be a new record for the vice-county of Surrey.

In a report for the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology entitled "A Bibliograph of the occurrence of Certain Woodland Coleoptera" by Paul T. Harding (1978), *Carpophilus sexpustulatus* is referred to grade 3 ("indicator of Old Forest in certain circumstances"). This is borne out by the present finding, seeing as Richmond Park has existed for some considerable time.

Occasionally found in stored products, the beetle is found in normal circumstances under the bark of logs — usually those of oak, but also beech, hornbeam, spruce, pine etc. However it seems that the adult will visit carrion (vide *Ent. Mo. Mag.* xviii. 1907, p.82). Most captures stem from the period January to June. The published records of which I am aware give rise to the following list of vice-counties — all in England: 8, 15, 16, 25, 31, 56, 63, 64.

I thank Messrs A. A. Allen, P. M. Hammond and P. T. Hammond and P. T. Harding for their comments. — D. PRANCE, 23 Brunswick Road, Kingston Hill, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey.